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SUBJECT: CHAD'S ELECTRICITY: MORE GENERATION BY 2011, AWAITING
COOLER TEMPS IN SHORT TERM

REFTEL: 222 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY

¶1. (SBU) Yaccoub Brahim Djouma, Director General of the national electric company, had little relief to offer for the weeks-long power outages that were commonplace in the capital, counting on replacement parts and cooler temperatures, in a meeting with emboffs July 6. He outlined a long-term plan to address the electricity shortage in the capital through two contracts to bring an additional ninety (90) megawatts of electricity online in the next two years. Yaccoub, a nephew of President Deby, assured us that the President was determined to resolve the capital's electricity crisis by 2011, which is -- not coincidentally -- the date for the next presidential election. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (SBU) Electricity problems continue in Chad's capital, N'Djamena. Residents and businesses routinely suffer from outages that last weeks; many government offices have been without electricity for over two weeks. One of the city's two main power stations has been offline since April, awaiting repairs, while the second's output has been reduced by cuts in underground transmission lines (the result of extensive road construction in the city). The Chadian Water and Electricity Company (STEE) itself lost electricity during emboffs' meeting with Director General Yaccoub Brahim Djouma, who recently returned to the position from several years at the Ministry of Finance.

SHORT TERM HOPES

¶3. (SBU) Yaccoub told emboffs that replacement parts and cooler temperatures would ameliorate outages in the short term. Necessary repairs to one plant at Farcha, a northwest suburb of N'Djamena, would be completed soon and replacement equipment for the damaged transmission lines had arrived, which would enable both plants to increase generation capacity shortly. In addition, the rainy season, due to begin any day, would bring cooler temperatures and reduce the high demand for electricity. Yaccoub underscored that President Deby had decided the capital's electricity problems would be resolved by 2011.

LONGER-TERM SOLUTIONS

¶4. (SBU) Yaccoub outlined the GOC's long-term plan to increase power generation in the capital. He stated that the government had recently signed a contract for a new plant of 60 megawatts (MW) to be located in Farcha. The French subsidiary of Finnish company Wartsilia would do the construction, having already built other plants in Chad. Yaccoub said that the European Union had also agreed to build a new 30 MW plant, with the EU financing 20 MWs and the GOC financing the remaining 10 MWs. The location of the EU-financed plant had not yet been determined, according to Yaccoub, but would likely also be northwest of the city. He said that both plants are expected to be operational in eighteen to twenty-four months.

¶5. (U) Minimize considered.

NIGRO